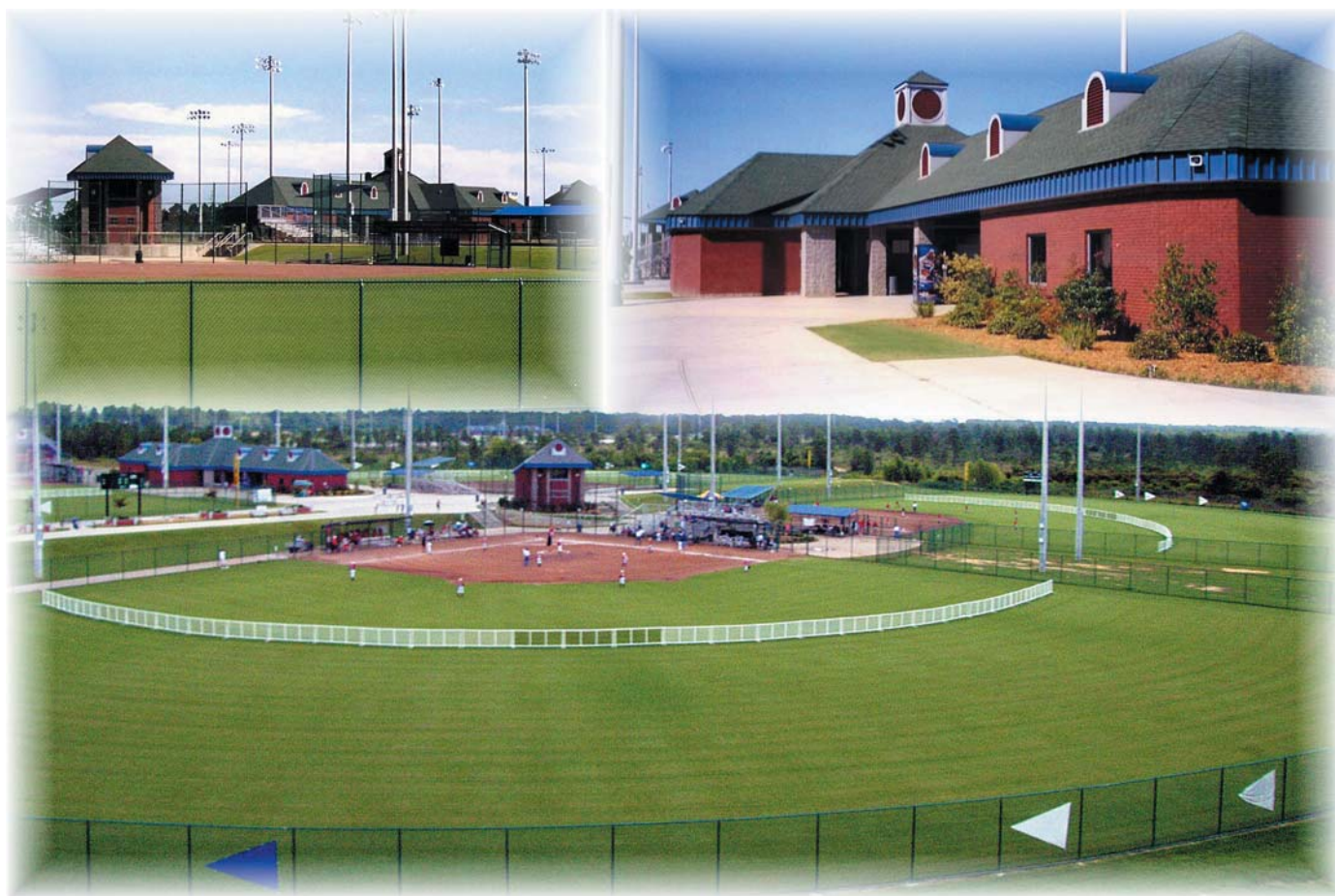


Featured Park of the Month

Gulfport Sportsplex in Gulfport, MS



If you're looking for information on the Gulfport Sportsplex and you go to the city's website, you'll find three words that describe it. It simply says "The South's Finest."

"We do believe the Sportsplex is the finest in the South," said George DeCoux, Director of Leisure Services for the city of Gulfport, Mississippi.

The Gulfport Sportsplex is located just off Interstate-10, and covers a whopping 250 acres. It's home to recreational and athletic amenities that city officials feel are second to none in the Southeast. The first class facilities are also host to many Super Series baseball events throughout the year, as well a Super Series National

Championship! Super Series Baseball of America® will hold it's 9U American and Minors Division, as well as the 12U National and Minors Division Summer National Championships at the Sportsplex this July.

The location of Sportsplex was originally a densely wooded area when the city annexed the land in 1995. Construction began the same year. The project stemmed from a department master plan survey conducted in '95, in which citizens of Gulfport along with committee members called for a multi-purpose recreational complex that could provide a wide array of opportunities and activities. They also wanted the complex



to generate revenue and contribute to the tourism market of many sports activities.

"We wanted something the city could be proud of. We knew the Sportsplex could be used for local leagues, but we also wanted to bring in regional and national sports tournaments which would bring some economic impact to the city," DeCoux said.

Currently the Sportsplex has nine-terraced ball fields with hybrid sand-based turf, crimson stone infields, scoring towers, and a control center with concessions and restrooms.

It also has four international sized soccer fields. Future construction plans include four more soccer fields, an eight court tennis complex, an outdoor amphitheater, walking, biking and skating trails, an environmental nature center, a children's playground, and an RV overnight parking area.

The city also has plans to construct **four more baseball fields**. The new fields will replicate Fenway Park in

Boston, Wrigley Field in Chicago, Yankee Stadium in New York and Camden Yards in Baltimore. Groundbreaking on these additional fields is expected to begin in 2005.

The Sportsplex will also feature the **Gulf Island Water Park**, expected to open next month. The Water Park covers 16 acres of land and is inside the Sportsplex.

"It will be one of the most exciting attractions in the Southeast," claimed Ron Haggerty, president of Coastal Entertainment Operations, the company building the Water Park.

The main attraction of the new Water Park will be the Master Blaster, a water propelled



roller coaster with a 50-foot tower. Other attractions will include a wave pool, a kiddie pool, a lazy river and tube slides.

"It's a world class water park," DeCoux proudly stated. "The Gulf Coast has long needed a new family attraction. We have plenty of fishing and plenty of gaming, but not enough for the kids to do," he added.

As mentioned before **the Water Park is expected to be open** when the Super Series Summer National Championships invade the Gulfport Sportsplex next month.

"The company will double or triple the construction crew if necessary to meet the opening deadline", DeCoux responded. "It will have a very strong economic impact on the city and the Coast," he concluded.

So when making your future plans to participate in a Super Series Baseball tournament, you may want to consider the Gulfport Sportsplex in Mississippi.

"It's definitely a state of the art ball park and facility," said Super Series host Rodney Shows.

So pack your bathing suit and find out for yourself why the folks in Gulfport call their Sportsplex "The South's Finest."



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